



# Bringing Home the Word

First Sunday of Advent (C)  
November 28, 2021

## God's Promise of Real Treasure

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

If anyone can keep a promise, it's God. His very nature is to be faithful to his promises and to fulfill all he has foretold. His promise after the fall of Adam and Eve was to send us a Redeemer, to bring peace to Jerusalem, and to reestablish his reign on earth. The prophets continually reminded the chosen race of God's fidelity and, although things looked far from their fulfillment, they insisted that God is faithful and would deliver.

Jesus, the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise, comes in two phases. First, by

coming as a baby in Bethlehem. This Incarnation and his arrival as Savior is what we're preparing to receive this Advent. Extra prayers, generous giving of your time, and special sacrifices are the best way to ready your soul for his coming.

Jesus' Second Coming will bring to completion what he started on the cross. His glorious return, which all of creation will foretell in those last days, is when the full effects of Christ's victory on the cross will be seen at the judgment of all living creatures.

The advice for all Christians in this period of waiting and preparation is to keep watch; to not allow the delay to lead us to drowsiness. Don't let the vanities of this world dazzle us, for in time, they will become dust.

God promises real treasures that will endure forever and, as we know, God keeps his promises. +

## Sunday Readings

### Jeremiah 33:14-16

In those days, at that time, I will make a just shoot spring up for David.

### 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all.

### Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

[Jesus said,] "Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life."

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## A Word from Pope Francis

Advent is a continuous call to hope: it reminds us that God is present in history to lead it to its ultimate goal, to lead it to its fullness, which is the Lord...God is not distant, he is always with us, to the extent that very often he knocks on the door to our heart.

—First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Am I preparing my soul for Christ's coming by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving?
- Have I settled on which concrete acts I will do?

# Put People First

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

We had cleaned and waxed the floor in our church hall. It looked great! Then at a parish celebration soon thereafter, as chairs and tables were being dragged across the floor, I caught myself worrying more about scratches and scuff marks than whether people were enjoying themselves. I'm sometimes guilty of putting things before people. Maybe all of us do this sometimes.

Later, sometime after the party at the hall, I reread St. Paul VI's encyclical of March 26, 1967, *On the Development of Peoples (Populorum Progressio)*. In economic development, people first. With technological advances, people first. In political activities, people first. As we address the complexity of the world's problems, people first. You get the idea. Human progress happens and can be measured to the extent that national and world resources serve people and their needs. There is a resounding refrain throughout St. Paul VI's encyclical: Put people first.

What happens when we don't put people first is clear. Human dignity can be diminished, trampled on, and obliterated. The gap between rich and poor can swallow up the jobless, the homeless, and the friendless. *Populorum Progressio* sharply reminds us that if the poor don't progress, no one does. Development—whether social, economic, educational, or any other kind—isn't progress at all if it fails to



meet the needs of the weakest and most vulnerable.

St. Paul VI (1897–1978), who led the Church as Pope from 1963 until his death, wrote, “This struggle toward a more human way of life certainly calls for hard work and imposes difficult sacrifices. But even adversity, when endured for the sake of one's brothers and out of love for them, can contribute greatly to human progress” (PP 79). “We must travel this road together...Can countless innocent children be saved? Can countless destitute families obtain more human living conditions? Every individual and every nation must face up to this issue, for it is their problem” (PP 80).

Think about how our nation measures progress. We can't merely repeal the Affordable Care Act. It must be replaced, or 20 million people will lose their insurance benefits. Immigration reform can't just be about building a wall. It must be about building thousands of strong families and keeping them together. Decisions to stop sending American jobs abroad must go hand in hand with

making goods and services affordable at home while providing healthy wages and at the same time helping poorer nations develop.

Read *Populorum Progressio*. It helps to be reminded to put people first. Maybe you worry about the scuff marks like I do and forget about the people at the party. Progress starts small. Hold the door for someone; let another go first. Buy a homeless person lunch; you'll both enjoy it. Stop work for a minute and call your family. That's progress. People first! +

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**PRAYER**

*Lord, help me to slow down and become more aware of my rushing aimlessly from place to place. Quiet my mind and steady my heart that I may live in your presence throughout the day.*

—From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

November 29–  
December 4

**Monday**, Advent Weekday:  
Is 2:1–5 / Mt 8:5–11

**Tuesday**, St. Andrew:  
Rom 10:9–18 / Mt 4:18–22

**Wednesday**, Advent Weekday:  
Is 25:6–10a / Mt 15:29–37

**Thursday**, Advent Weekday:  
Is 26:1–6 / Mt 7:21, 24–27

**Friday**, St. Francis Xavier:  
Is 29:17–24 / Mt 9:27–31

**Saturday**, Advent Weekday:  
Is 30:19–21, 23–26 / Mt 9:35–10:1, 5a, 6–8

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